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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 AMMAN 001719

SIPDIS

E.O. 12958: DECL: 03/20/2013

TAGS: [AEMR](#) [AMGT](#) [ASEC](#) [CASC](#) [CVIS](#) [IZ](#) [JO](#)

SUBJECT: TFI201: AMMAN SITREP 7 (3/22 1845 LOCAL)

Classified By: Acting DCM Doug Silliman. Reason 1.5 (b,d).

General Overview

11. (SBU) The Embassy maintained a standfast posture throughout 3/22, but will open 3/23 on a regular work schedule. However, American personnel will be limited to essential movements.

12. (C) Scattered demonstrations and protests occurred around the country today, but far fewer than yesterday. In Irbid, the Islamic Action Front (IAF) organized a rally (ongoing as of 1700 local) of approximately 2,000 people where a series of speakers have been denouncing U.S. aggression against Iraq. PSD security personnel are present and there have been no reports of violence. At 1500 local time, PSD reported that a protest involving 2,000 young people was ongoing in the Baqa'a Palestinian refugee camp. The protesters have thrown rocks at the police who have responded with teargas. The protest remains confined to the camp. A candlelight vigil is planned for this evening in the Shmeisani neighborhood of Amman. Finally, the southern city of Ma'an has been quiet all day, following yesterday's protests that involved several thousand people. The PSD says that one protester was injured in yesterday's demonstrations, but denies rumors that one or more protesters may have been killed.

13. (SBU) Queen Alia International Airport (QAIA) continues regular operations. Royal Jordanian Airlines continues service to all destinations, with the exception of Baghdad. Air France restored its Amman-Paris route today and will operate it on a reduced level as events and passenger loads dictate. It is the first European carrier to resume flights.

14. (SBU) Mobile and fixed-line telecommunications continue uninterrupted, although there have been occasional delays in international service over the past few days due to the large volume of traffic, according to local telecom officials.

Consular Issues

15. (C) IOM reports that one Amcit and a Japanese citizen crossed into Jordan from Iraq today. IOM transported them to Ruweished, where they hired a taxi to Amman. Inquiries to the Consular section continue to be very light.

GOJ Actions/Statements

16. (C) None since previous sitrep.

Security

17. (C) Cooperation with all GOJ security agencies continues to be excellent. Additional security measures around the Embassy remain in place, although the additional riot police that were deployed yesterday prior to Friday prayers were removed.

Refugee/Humanitarian Issues

18. (C) The Jordan-Iraq border remains open. The flow of people into Jordan continues to be light and limited to TCNs; no Iraqi asylum seekers have yet to attempted to enter Jordan. Some TCNs who have crossed report that Iraqi military forces are preventing Iraqis from leaving Iraq. UNHCR and IOM are investigating this claim. As of 1200 local time 329 TCNs are at the IOM/JRCS transit camp in Ruweished. Of this total are 229 Sudanese, 30 Somalis and a handful of other nationalities.

Press

19. (C) Embassy IO and Centcom PA detailee briefed U.S.

reporters congregated at Ruweished on the continued dangers of crossing into Iraqi territory. Journalists are increasingly frantic to get across the border, even, it appears, in the face of our attempts to explain the dangers of such a trip. While at Ruweished, a local UNHCR representative phoned IO and asked if USG could pass on any intelligence or other information regarding movements of Iraqis from inside Iraq toward the Iraq/Jordan border.

110. (C) CNN began running a report quoting "Kurdish sources" that U.S. Special Forces would be landing in Northern Iraq from Jordan. We've received a few questions for comment. Our posture has been not to comment on the specific report. Jordanian officials told us that they will continue to deny such reports.
GNEHM